

March 2002

The LSC – Making a Difference and Saving Money

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) represents a unique, focused and efficient new approach to planning, funding and developing post-16 education and training in this country.

It also represents a significant saving to the public purse.

Created in April 2001, the LSC took over most of the responsibilities of the former Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and the Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) as well as some from the former Department of Education and Employment (DfEE).

The Council is responsible for all post-16 education and training in England, other than the university sector. This includes the planning and funding of further education colleges; work based learning for young people; workforce development; adult and community learning; information, advice and guidance for adults; and education business links. From

April 2002 we will also be responsible for funding school sixth forms.

Despite the enormity of our Government remit, the Learning and Skills Council is saving taxpayers money – an estimated £72 million a year in cash terms on what was spent before.

To carry out the job we are now doing would have cost around £290 million a year under the old system. Our running costs are £218 million a year.

These are big numbers – but they fall into perspective when you look at the scale of the work we are doing.

- The LSC is responsible for an annual budget of £7.3 billion.
- More people than ever before are now involved in further education and work based training – almost six million in the classroom and in the workplace are directly affected by what we do.
- 47 local Councils, supported by a national office in Coventry, deliver services to meet education, training and skills needs across the whole of England.
- The Council employs nearly

5,000 staff working from 52 offices.

The LSC has taken on responsibilities over and above what was done before.

These include:

- Specific action to raise basic skills so that, by 2004, we will have helped improve the basic literacy and numeracy of at least 750,000 adults in this country.
- Active intervention to raise standards in the further education and work based learning sectors. The LSC has a £185 million standards fund and to raise the quality of education and training on offer.
- New initiatives such as Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) designed to increase the skills base of the nation by recognising excellence. We are on track to achieving our aim that at least half of all FE colleges will have at least one department with CoVE status by 2004.
- Launching the Bite Size programme of free short courses to attract people back into learning, many for the first time since leaving

school. Around 70,000 people took part last year in what was the biggest campaign of its kind ever seen in this country. Bite Size 2002 promises to be even bigger and better.

- The funding of school sixth forms – ensuring a smooth transition of funding from this April in order to maximise the amount of money going directly to schools.

The LSC represents the first truly unified approach to post-16 education and training in this country.

It also represents good value for money in the delivery of the Government's ambitious remit for further education and vocational training – saving 25% on what was spent before in a streamlined and focused drive to improve the skills of the nation.

For further information about the Learning and Skills Council, visit our web site (www.lsc.gov.uk) or call our help line on 0845 019 4170.